

gift, and he's trying to talk about what motivated him and Walton to do it. "I worry about kids who are born into the world without a choice," he says over a huge swordfish steak at Washington's Capital Grille. "It's like being born already dead. There are too many children like that, and I just feel we have to do what we can for them."

He is just a little weary of critics pointing out the inadequacy of his effort, which amounts to a partial scholarship (one-third to two-thirds of a tuition) for K-8 youngsters who are accepted into private or parochial schools and then win a lottery for the awards. The 1,000 lucky winners are ensured of scholarship help for at least three years, and probably through high school.

"Sure, I wish we could do more—and over time, we will," he says. "Sure, the parents will have to put up some money [for application fees, uniforms, books] they many have. And sure, what we are doing won't fix the public schools. But I'm not going to beat myself up for what I can't do."

Nor will this lifelong bachelor concern himself over the politics of his effort. "I'm not allied with the people who are pushing vouchers. I'm not opposed to them, necessarily. This is something separate."

"Let me put it this way. I've been what happens to people when they feel they have no choice in their lives. The kids I worked with at the reform school—I was an assistant hockey coach—wouldn't cheer if the game was close, or if they were behind. But when they were up 10-0, they would raise the roof. They had lost so many times, they couldn't let anybody see they cared about losing. What was true for those kids in sports is true for the kids we're trying to help in life. We want them to have the courage to try to succeed, to meet high standards."

Is he afraid of skimming the public schools of some of their brightest children (and most committed parents)?

"I see it differently," he says. "It's the people who are defending the status quo who ought to be called to task. I look at it the way the kids themselves look at it. I talk to them, and they say maybe about one-tenth of their friends will make it for sure and, with help, maybe half of the rest. The others don't want to try. But then maybe one of those will look at the others and say, well, maybe I'll give it a shot. In other words, you start with those you can help, and with luck pretty soon you've got a majority. The ways things are going now, the majority is on the other end—and they keep the brighter kids from trying."

Forstmann, who recently was named man of the year by the Inner City Fund of New York, of which he is a director, doesn't particularly like the limelight. The only reason he agreed to the news conference, he says, is the hope that maybe his effort might inspire other people of means to join in.

"There are just so many kids who need a boost that they aren't getting, the way things are now. The point is, there's nothing wrong with the kids. What's wrong is the situation in which they find themselves. We can complain about it, or people of goodwill can step up to the plate and try to do something about it."

Forstmann is stepping up.

□ 1745

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

IRA EXPANSION NEEDED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, the Congress is about to enact one of the most important proposals in several years, legislation to reform the antitaxpayer bias of the IRS. Once this legislation to protect taxpayer rights is passed, the focus will shift once again to questions involving tax policy. As we all know, a national debate on fundamental tax policy issues is expected in coming months. This debate will center on several proposals advanced for sweeping reform of the current income tax system.

Many expect actual tax reform to emerge only after an extended period of debate ends with the emergence of a consensus on a tax package. Given the complexity of the issues involved, this process could take a long time, perhaps years.

In the interim, the current counterproductive tax system would still undermine economic incentives while tax reform efforts proceed. Some action is needed now to limit the damage resulting from the current tax system. The tax system we know today has many problems, but one of its main defects is its bias against personal savings. Personal savings is taxed once out of income and then the return on savings is taxed once again when we tax interest.

This multiple taxation penalizes personal savings, a major source of economic growth, so it is no surprise that America has one of the lowest personal savings rates in the world.

This bias can be addressed by increasing the tax deduction for IRA contributions, currently set at \$2,000 annually. Earlier this year, I introduced a bill, H.R. 891, to boost IRA deduction limits by \$500 per year over several years. When fully phased in, a middle class family could deduct up to \$7,000 a year for an annual IRA contribution. I strongly urge that an increase in the IRA deductions be part of any tax relief plan offered in 1998.

An increase in IRA deductions would help middle class families save for their future, become more financially independent, and be better able to deal with unexpected events and become less dependent, less dependent on government. It would also give them a greater stake in the United States economic system. It is a tax cut that average Americans would understand and strongly support.

An increase in IRA deductions would increase personal savings, a major source of investment and economic growth. This would help firms to supply their workers with the best and most advanced tools, thus increasing productivity and income. If we want personal savings to increase, we should increase IRA deductions for middle class Americans. A tax code that penalizes savings and investment makes no sense.

Middle class taxpayers need a means of addressing their responsibilities to save for retirement, for education, for medical expenses, for unemployment, for first-time homeownership and perhaps some other purposes. Federal tax policy should not discriminate against taxpayers willing and able to take on these responsibilities for themselves, but are prevented from doing so by the disruptive, destructive impact of the current tax system.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2107, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1998

Mr. SOLOMON, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 105-342) on the resolution (H. Res. 277) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2107) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1119, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 1998

Mr. SOLOMON, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 105-343) on the resolution (H. Res. 278) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 1119) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 1998 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WALSH). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California [Ms. WATERS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentlewoman from California [Ms. WATERS].

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.